

SAMUEL B. ELLIOTT.

MAY 18, 1860.—Ordered to be printed.

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MR. TAPPAN, from the Committee of Claims, made the following

REPORT.

*The Committee of Claims, to whom was referred the memorial of Samuel B. Elliott, praying compensation for specimens of mineralogy, &c., have had the same under consideration, and report:*

The memorialist states that he was in the exploring expedition under Captain Charles Wilkes, from 1838 to 1842; that he purchased from the inhabitants of different places visited by them a number of specimens of mineralogy, natural history, &c., which were contained in thirteen boxes, and which cost memorialist \$400. These specimens, the memorialist says, he surrendered to the government, by order of Captain Wilkes, in full expectation of receiving pay promised, in satisfaction of what he had disbursed, but has never been paid anything. The memorialist furnished no evidence of the truth of his allegations, and your committee called upon the Commissioner of Patents for a report. Under date of February 20, 1860, that officer says: "The collection referred to in the petition of Samuel B. Elliott is not now in custody of this office, having been transferred in 1857 to the Smithsonian Institution. It is not in my power, therefore, to respond to the inquiries of the committee."

A letter was next addressed to Professor Henry, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, asking for all the information in his possession touching Mr. Elliott's claim. On the 30th March that officer writes: "Although I have made inquiry into the matter, I can find nothing in the absence of Captain Wilkes very satisfactory to communicate to you in regard to it. In some instances individuals purchased specimens with their own money, and were afterwards obliged to turn them over to the government without remuneration; but in such cases the persons may perhaps be able to produce their receipts and vouchers for the money paid."

Under the general order requiring the specimens to be delivered up, Mr. Elliott was entitled to a receipt for his thirteen boxes. This he has not produced, nor any vouchers or other evidence to show either the specimens surrendered or the amount he paid for them.

Under this view of the evidence, your committee report back the case with the recommendation that the prayer of the memorialist be not granted.

